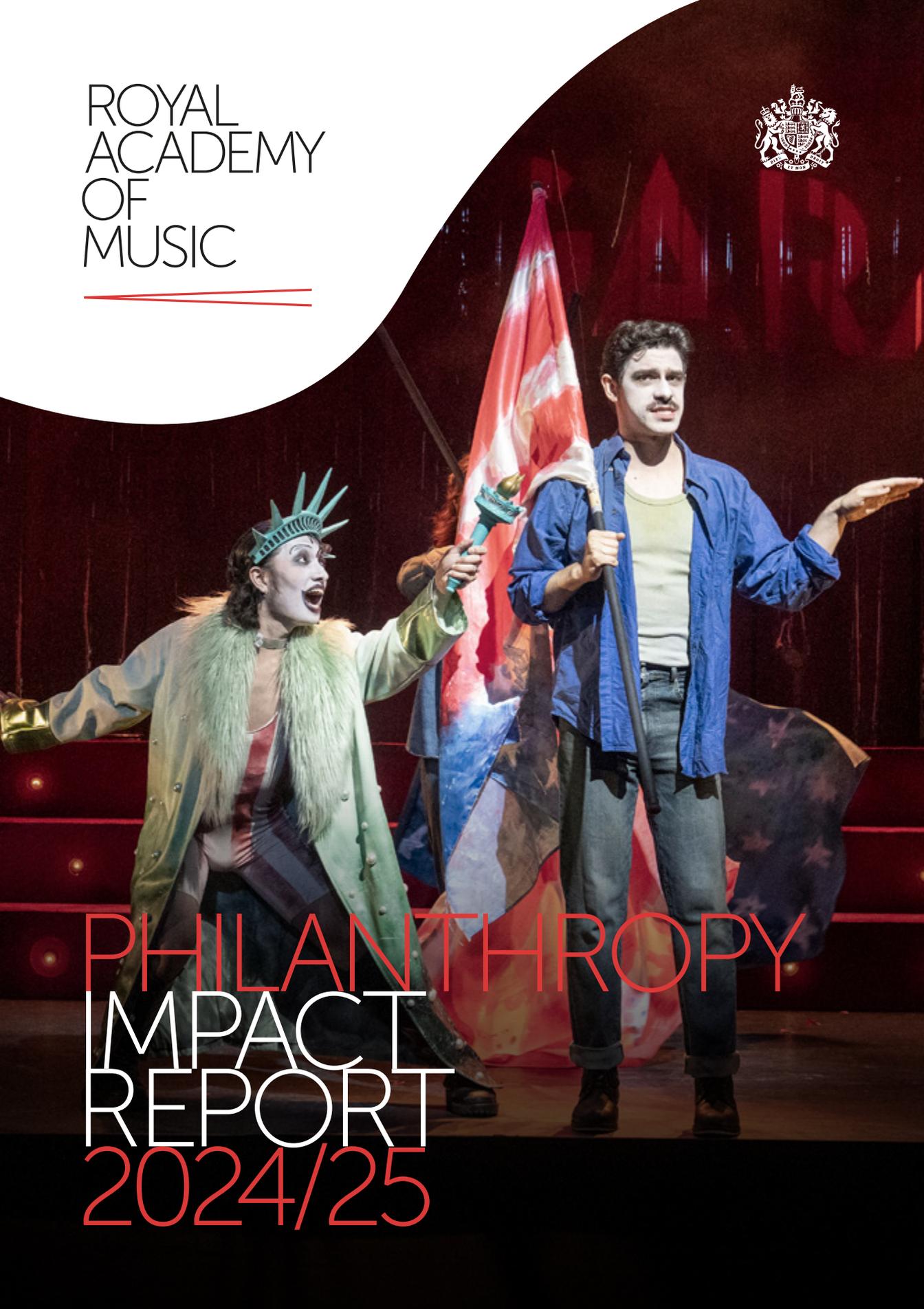


ROYAL
ACADEMY
OF
MUSIC



PHILANTHROPY
IMPACT
REPORT
2024/25



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WELCOME



I often say that the Royal Academy of Music is 'home' to the world's finest young musicians. But what does that mean? I hope it means that this is where they feel confident and that they belong; where they know they will be challenged in ways that help them to grow; a place where they are cared for; somewhere to return when they need to be reminded why they do what they do.

Providing that sense of home is not something I do alone. All my colleagues – teachers, staff and students – are part of this family, and you are too: our friends and supporters. It is a pleasure to update you on your part in making this such a special place which keeps music moving forward.

Times are challenging for musicians. As a far-reaching conservatoire, the Academy continues to evolve to meet the demands of a fast-changing music industry. We are extending our reach with new facilities in east London, creating fresh pathways for performance, community engagement and collaboration.

None of this would be possible without your steadfast belief in our mission, which helps us to provide the foundations for a rich, varied and fulfilling musical life.

Professor Jonathan Freeman-Attwood CBE
Principal



Talented musicians thrive when given the freedom to focus on their goals. At the Academy in 2024/25, more than 1,587 donors contributed over £10m to ensure outstanding young artists had access to the highest quality training.

Philanthropy provides Academy musicians with vital scholarships, bursaries and specialist training. Thanks to our loyal donors, promising artists from all backgrounds can pursue their ambitions free from financial constraints.

Throughout this report, you will see how acts of generosity are helping us secure the future of music. By opening doors to creative opportunities and investing in modern facilities, your support remains a driving force behind our success.

Thank you for the essential role you play in empowering the next generation of musicians as they build confidence in their craft.

Kirsty MacDonald
Deputy Principal (Advancement)

YOUR IMPACT

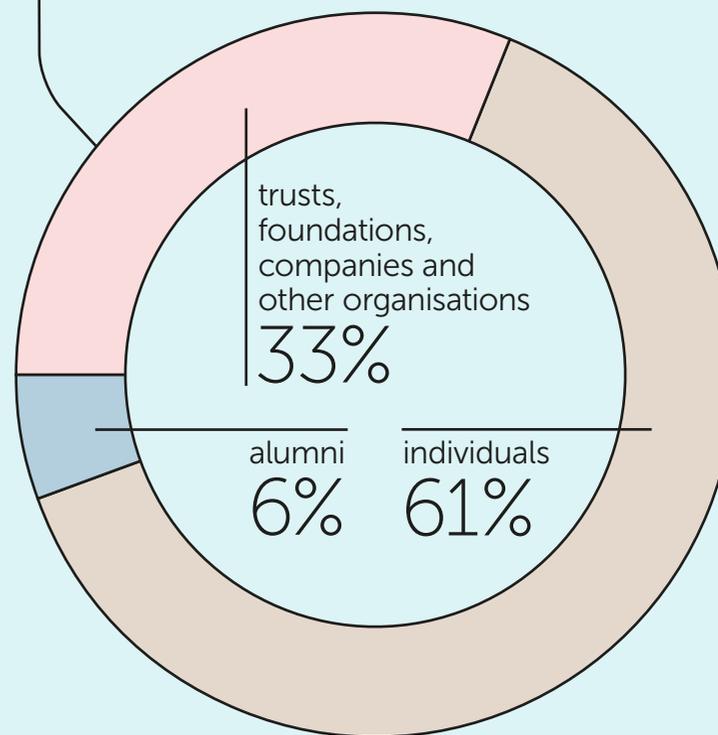


£10.02m

donated by

1,587

donors



54%

of all scholarships and bursaries were philanthropically funded

£755k for widening participation

£4.6m bequests received

£3.82m raised for our endowment

THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC'S FUTURE



By investing in the highest quality training, together we can ensure that music will continue to thrive in the next century and beyond

Philanthropy plays a vital role at the Academy. The Royal Academy of Music's Future enables transformative experiences and opportunities for promising young talent.

In 2022 we launched the largest fundraising campaign in the Academy's 200-year history and the most ambitious of any conservatoire outside the US, setting a target of £60m to mark the Academy's Bicentenary. Thanks to an incredible response from our donors, and more compelling reasons to raise funds, in October 2024 we announced an extension of this target to £100m.

By the end of the 2024/25 academic year, we had already reached almost £80m.

At this point, gifts to the campaign had:

- supported 2,332 scholarships and bursaries funded by philanthropic gifts
- increased our endowment with donations totalling £23.7m
- nurtured young talent at the grassroots level, funding initiatives in communities and schools
- enabled over 750 students each year to prepare for their future careers through professional development opportunities
- supported outstanding teachers at the Academy, who share their world-class skills with students
- allowed us to invest in new large-scale rehearsal and teaching facilities



'The Academy leads the way with confidence, showing that philanthropy – given generously and deployed effectively – is one of the most powerful sources of hope that music and the arts have today'

Sir Simon Robey
Chair of the Royal
Academy's Governing Body

TODAY'S ASPIRATION, TOMORROW'S ARTIST

This is the place where the future of music is forged with creativity and confidence

The Royal Academy of Music has been at the forefront of music education for two centuries. Aspiring musicians travel from all over the world to learn from leading faculty and visiting professors. They encourage students' artistic identities and help them to develop their craft.

Undergraduate and postgraduate programmes are carefully designed to support students' progress and meet the possibilities and demands of a rapidly evolving profession.

Students at the Academy take full advantage of the many creative and collaborative opportunities on offer, so that by the time they graduate, they are well-rounded entrepreneurial musicians equipped with the tools they need for diverse and rewarding careers.

With international partnerships and successful alumni spanning the globe, the Academy's influence is felt by a vibrant community of musicians at the forefront of their profession.

In 2024/25, 775 musicians came to the Academy from 59 countries to study over 50 disciplines with one shared goal: to follow their dreams to become busy and respected musicians.



'My time at the Academy has shaped me profoundly. It has equipped me with the necessary tools to become a versatile and resilient artist with the ability to thrive in this rapidly evolving industry'

Llinos Haf Jones
MA Vocal Studies
The Baroness de
Turckheim Award

GLOBAL IMPACT



GRADUATE SUCCESSES THROUGHOUT 2024/25

- 11 of Classic FM's 30 global 'Rising Stars' were Academy students and alumni
- Metropolitan Opera, New York: starring roles for Freddie De Tommaso in his debut in *Tosca* and David Butt Philip in *Fidelio*
- Academy alumni took centre stage at the BBC Proms with performances from Iestyn Davies, Lucy Crowe, Dame Evelyn Glennie, Benjamin Grosvenor and Chi-Chi Nwanoku
- Mark Aspinall won the Olivier Award for Outstanding Musical Contribution and Jarius McClanahan joined the cast of *Hamilton*
- Jacob Collier became the first British musician to be awarded a Grammy for each of his first five albums, winning Best Arrangement, Instrumental or A Capella
- Sir Simon Rattle spent his second season as Chief Conductor of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra

CHARLOTTE SPRUIT

SPOT LIGHT

Our alumni lead the way in the modern music industry

Charlotte graduated in 2024 with a master's degree from the Academy, where she was a Bicentenary Scholar. Since then, Charlotte has given recitals at Wigmore Hall and Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and performed Beethoven's Triple Concerto with Jean-Guihen Queyras, Kristian Bezuidenhout and the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century at the Cello Biennale Amsterdam. She has also performed with the Residentie Orkest, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, Les Ambassadeurs ~ La Grande Ecurie and Pauliner Barockensemble.

Winner of the Young Classical Artists Trust international auditions, Charlotte was also named as one of Classic FM's 'Rising Stars' and 'One to Watch' by Gramophone Magazine, after releasing her debut album *Le Mercure Galant* with Jonathan Manson and Sergio Bucheli.



'My final year of study supported my transition from student life to working professionally. The Academy helped me to take the first steps in my career, from my audition for Young Classical Artists Trust to winning the Bach Competition in Leipzig in 2022, as well as lending me a Stradivarius violin for important concerts.

My scholarship enabled me to immerse myself in the projects that mattered most and to focus exclusively on my development. This was crucial in establishing myself as a working artist. I am very excited for the future, and I feel that my studies at the Academy have prepared me incredibly well for the industry'

PREPARED FOR THE PROFESSION



Through performance, students develop the versatility they need to become independent, professional artists

Academy musicians perform in hundreds of concerts, productions and masterclasses throughout the academic year. The vibrant and diverse programme of public events at the Academy offers every student the chance to hone their craft and to receive mentorship from seasoned industry professionals.

In 2024/25 our students also performed at world-famous venues including the Royal Albert Hall, Snape Maltings and Carnegie Hall.

When asked which performances inspired them the most, students highlighted:

- **SIDE-BY-SIDE** opportunities with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Septura, Nash Ensemble and Dunedin Consort at venues including Southbank Centre, Wigmore Hall and Greyfriars Kirk
- Academy Chamber Orchestra's performance of Haydn's Symphony No 49, with Barbara Hannigan stepping in on the day of the concert to conduct
- Academy Jazz Orchestra performing alongside the legendary bassist, composer and bandleader Dave Holland
- Royal Academy Opera's fully staged productions of Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* and Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*
- *Resounding Shores*, the Sunday concert series celebrating music by Henry Purcell and other English masterpieces from the late-Elizabethan era to the end of the 17th century
- John Wilson and Ryan Wigglesworth conducting the Academy Symphony Orchestra in performances of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto and Nielsen's Symphony No 4
- Academy Jazz Orchestra and Frost Jazz Orchestra featuring on a recording of *Some Days Are Better: The Lost Scores* by Kenny Wheeler Legacy, receiving critical acclaim and a Grammy nomination



'The Academy turns every performance, whether a competition, staged production or a studio workshop, into a step towards artistic growth. The training, mentorship and performance opportunities I've received here have shaped me in ways I could never have imagined'

Zixin Tang
Royal Academy Opera
Jennifer Vyvyan Scholarship



ARTIST DEVELOPMENT

Young musicians need to build their own careers through practical experience and creative exploration

Life for young musicians can be an uphill battle. In order to establish their own artistic identities and stand out in a competitive industry, they need a broad range of experiences.

In addition to performing in a full calendar of events, Academy musicians have access to our Artist Development programme, which has been embedded into the curriculum. Through talks, workshops, projects and creative schemes and festivals, students have access to practical advice about life as a professional musician.

The annual *Students Create* festival provides opportunities for Academy musicians to collaborate across departments and bring their original ideas to life. With 16 performances in January 2025, the festival programme contained an eclectic mix of concerts, staged events and video, featuring jazz-Baroque fusion, a new fully staged opera, a techno night and 13 world premieres, and reached 1,665 audience members.

After taking part in an Artist Development project, students gained access to the following opportunities:

- **percussionist Meadow Brooks performed at the Courtauld Gallery for the Director's exhibition launch**
- **soprano Aimee Skye Wilmot was selected for the Spoleto Vocal Arts Workshop in the former Italian studios of Anna Mahler and Sol LeWitt**
- **The Juno Duo, a voice and guitar chamber ensemble formed at *Students Create*, has since performed at King's Place, Petworth Festival and as part of *Music in the Museum* at the London Transport Museum**
- **composer Will Parker began working as a production assistant for Kenny Wax Productions**

'The Academy has opened new doors to me which have strengthened my professional and personal development'

Sofia Reznikova
BMus Piano
Alexis Gregory Award

YOUNG ARTISTS RECORDING SCHEME

SPOTLIGHT

In an industry where a strong digital presence is critical, creating outstanding material has never been more essential

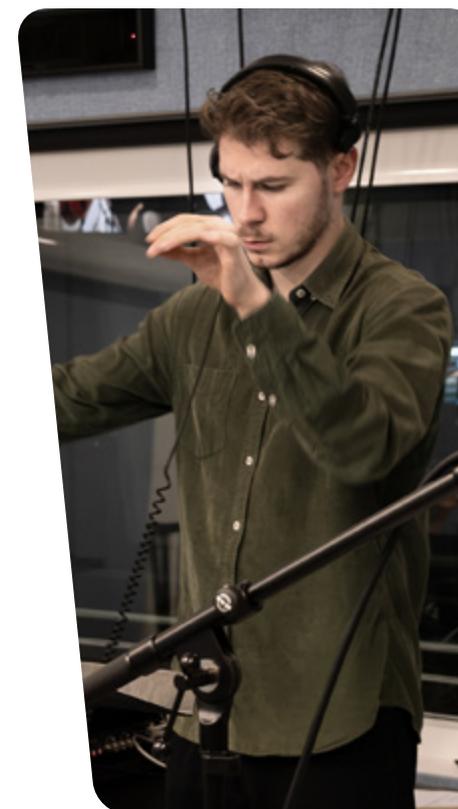
Established in 2021 with support from The Gatsby Charitable Foundation, the Young Artists Recording Scheme (YARS) enables musicians to engage with an international recording community and the realities of an evolving digital market. The programme is led directly by the Principal.

Thanks to Gatsby, students can work with professional producers to create high-quality recordings which showcase their talent, while developing vital professional skills in curation, production and self-promotion.

In 2024/25, Gatsby increased its support and extended it for a further three years. YARS has since expanded its collaborations with producers and recording venues, allowing students to explore new formats and approaches. This has included a project with Grammy-nominated vocal ensemble VOCES8 at their recording studios, the VOCES8 Centre, which produced professional-standard videos featuring 36 young artists.

Gatsby's grant allowed us to upgrade our on-site recording infrastructure; a vital resource for students who need to make their own recordings for auditions, competitions and their portfolios.

Fifty students have benefited from YARS since 2021, securing industry contacts and professional work, and reaching new audiences. When The Juno Duo approached promoters with two videos recorded at the VOCES8 Centre, they received a positive response from the Omni Foundation for the Performing Arts. The Juno Duo's recording of Stephen Goss' 'Rosie Probert and Captain Cat' has now reached nearly 120,000 people online.



'Recording is an invaluable creative dimension for our students. The practical process of gathering recorded material is vital for securing work from prospective employers'

Professor Jonathan Freeman-Attwood CBE
Principal



MUSICAL THEATRE

SPOT LIGHT

Talented young performers who dream of performing in the West End and on Broadway require rigorous training

For over 25 years the Royal Academy Musical Theatre Company has launched the careers of some of the greatest performers in the industry. Our alumni regularly feature in the world's most famous productions, from *The Lion King* and *Six* to *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Les Misérables*.

Donors are instrumental in enabling the delivery of the one-year postgraduate musical theatre programme, funding training initiatives and staged productions as well as providing access to industry networks.

Thanks to the foresight of The Gatsby Charitable Foundation, we are proud to have become the UK's first conservatoire with a fully endowed chair. Under the direction of our first Gatsby Chair of Musical Theatre, Professor Daniel Bowling, the Academy's course is recognised as one of the best in the world.

Philanthropy gives aspiring musicians access to invaluable experiences that create a bridge from training to the profession. In 2024/25, 14 of the 35 students in the Musical Theatre Company were supported by philanthropically funded scholarships and/or bursaries. Every student achieved Distinction in their final performance and nearly all of them signed with an agent before graduating.

The 2024/25 cohort have already embarked on professional careers, with graduates joining the cast and crew of the Broadway to UK transfer of *Oh, Mary!* and UK and international tours of *Miss Saigon*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Tick Tick... Boom!*.

'Studying has been hands-on and oriented towards getting us into the right rooms and booking jobs. Professor Daniel Bowling has shaped me in so many ways. It is thanks to his guidance that I secured my audition for *Miss Saigon*'

Anh-Khoa Trần
MA Musical Theatre
Disney Theatrical
Productions Award



SUPPORTING FUTURE PERFORMERS

Philanthropy enhances every aspect of the Musical Theatre Department

Our donors provided vital support in 2024/25:

- for the fourth consecutive year, philanthropist and theatre producer Dianne Roberts provided significant funding to support the essential foundations of the musical theatre course, including performances in the Susie Sainsbury Theatre
- in its fifth year, the Maria Björnson Fellowship in Theatre Design enabled an emerging creative to work alongside students on the Academy's two end-of-year productions: *Nine* and *Assassins*
- Disney Theatrical Productions funded five scholarships designed to encourage greater ethnic and cultural diversity in the industry
- leading names in musical theatre including the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation and Mackintosh Foundation funded 14 scholarships and bursaries
- the Tomoro Foundation supported four scholarships and committed funding towards our new landmark facilities on London City Island

THE MARIA BJÖRNSSON FELLOWSHIP IN THEATRE DESIGN

To build the foundations for a rewarding career, students need to work alongside exceptional creative teams

Maria Björnson was internationally recognised as a leading name in theatre design. Before her death in 2002, Maria won Tony Awards for her designs for Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera* and Trevor Nunn's *Aspects of Love*. Her legacy spans cultural organisations including the Royal Shakespeare Company, National Theatre, Royal Ballet and Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, English National Opera and Almeida Theatre, as well as shows in the West End and on Broadway.

Since its establishment in 2021/22, the Maria Björnson Memorial Fellowship in Theatre Design has supported five designers who have enriched their portfolios and delivered the set and costume designs for end-of-year productions in the award-winning Susie Sainsbury Theatre.

Andrew Exeter was a Maria Björnson Fellow in Theatre Design in 2023/24 and returned in 2024/25 after developing designs for the Academy's production of *Spring Awakening*. This year, Andrew worked closely with the Musical Theatre Company on the stagings for Sondheim's *Assassins* and Maury Yeston's *Nine*. Students are able to learn how to interact effectively with creative teams in an environment that replicates the standards and expectations of a professional company.



'I've learned so much about stage management, costume and sound during technical rehearsals for productions. Working alongside experienced industry professionals has taught me a lot about collaboration and how to present myself in the rehearsal room'

Georgia Blessitt
MA Musical Theatre
Disney Theatrical
Productions Award

STUDENT SUPPORT



£5.8m in scholarships and bursaries to
610 students from 59 countries
225 students supported by means-tested bursaries

With the right support, young musicians can make the most of their education

The offer of a scholarship or bursary is often vital to enable an aspiring musician to accept their place and immerse themselves in training. Along with UK undergraduate tuition fees of £9,250 a year (as of 2024/25), prospective students must also consider additional expenses including accommodation, food and travel, as well as instrument upkeep and repairs.

This means that young musicians need at least £24,000 a year in London for their rent and living costs. In 2024/25, fees for international students were set at £28,250 for undergraduates and up to £37,000 for postgraduates, with the added cost of student visa applications.

Many of our donors choose to support scholarships and bursaries due to the direct impact they have on the lives of young artists. In 2024/25 77% of Academy students received financial assistance, with 54% of this funded by philanthropy.

In 2024/25 we received funding from 26 legacies, which supported 13 new awards in the same year: a 46% increase on the previous year.

We are very grateful to those who have informed us of their plans to leave a gift to the Academy in their Will – a superb way to help us shape the future of music by supporting the musicians of tomorrow.



'As an international student with no financial support from my home country, receiving a scholarship has been deeply encouraging. I have been able to dedicate myself entirely to my development, without the overwhelming burden of financial stress that so many young musicians face'

Nikita Demidenko
BMus Piano
Graham Roberts Scholarship



BICENTENARY SCHOLARS

SPOT LIGHT

Bicentenary Scholars are outstanding young musicians who are offered significant funding and artistic development opportunities

Pioneering founders Mikhail and Svetlana Bakhtiarov launched the scholarship programme in 2018 in anticipation of the Academy's Bicentenary celebrations.

In 2024/25 there were 11 Bicentenary Scholars. Thanks to the generosity of the Bakhtiarovs, 41 students were supported between September 2018 and July 2025, with the programme now extended.

Bicentenary Scholars are selected at audition by the Principal and given the highest level of financial support. The scholars get access to bespoke training, industry networks, and some also get the chance to record with Linn Records.

The international collaborations that have emerged from the programme include one with Fondazione Mascarade Opera, also supported by the Bakhtiarovs. Artists from Mascarade and the Academy meet at an annual reunion, establishing connections they can sustain for the rest of their careers.

Bicentenary Scholars go on to establish themselves as leading artists in the profession, and have included:

- **cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason, who has performed with many of the world's leading orchestras**
- **Margarita Balanas and Nicolò Umberto Foron, who joined the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich and London Symphony Orchestra respectively as Assistant Conductors**
- **violinist Charlie Lovell-Jones, who leads John Wilson's Sinfonia of London in their celebrated recordings**



'Thanks to this scholarship, I have been able to work alongside talented peers from all over the world. These collaborative friendships have been invaluable to my personal and artistic development'

Binny Yang
Royal Academy Opera
Bicentenary Scholar

ELISABETH AND GEORGE WELLS

SPOT
LIGHT

Elisabeth and George Wells established their connection with the Academy in 2007 when they met Head of Organ, David Titterington, in his role as Artistic and Executive Director of St Albans International Organ Festival. The Festival was founded in 1963 by renowned organist and former Academy organ teacher Professor Peter Hurford.

Both Elisabeth and George loved listening to classical music, on the radio and from their vast record collection. They particularly enjoyed the music of JS Bach and were great admirers of Peter Hurford. Even after a decline in her health and mobility, Elisabeth taught piano from her home.

Elisabeth and David often exchanged cards and letters with updates on the International Organ Festival. Elisabeth also took a keen interest in the Academy's organ students and their successes.

George died in 2017. When Elisabeth died in 2023, she left their entire estate to the Academy, with a bequest of £1.8m.

This transformative donation established two new scholarships in 2024/25 to support the next generation of musicians: the Elisabeth and George Wells Organ Scholarship, which is endowed for 25 years, and the Elisabeth Wells Scholarship, which can be awarded to a scholar of any discipline.

Thanks to Elisabeth's foresight and generosity, nine students were supported by the Elisabeth Wells Scholarship in 2024/25 across a range of disciplines: violin, jazz double bass, harp, clarinet, cello, oboe, viola and organ.



'Elisabeth and George Wells' passion for music and their legacy of supporting young musicians is inspiring. I hope I can honour their memories by making the most of the support this scholarship offers me'

Eliot Gleave White
BMus Clarinet
Elisabeth Wells Scholarship

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Global exchanges empower young musicians to excel within an international network of peers and mentors

Since 2022, the Sir Elton John Global Exchange Programme has provided unparalleled opportunities for young musicians to broaden their artistic horizons. Led by the Academy, the programme brings together 12 leading conservatoires worldwide, fostering collaboration and cultural exchange.

In 2024/25, seven students from the Academy took part in the programme. Nine young musicians also came to London from Madrid, Munich, New York, Shanghai, Tokyo and Toronto to collaborate on chamber and symphony orchestra projects.

Highlights from international collaborations in 2024/25:

- musicians from The Juilliard School took part in the Academy's Boulez 100 celebrations
- conductor Jess Hoskins spent a week at the Sibelius Academy, Helsinki
- violinists Paloma Bharucha and Agatha Parkin performed with the Symphony Orchestra at Madrid's Auditorio Nacional de Música
- violist Theo Hayward and double bassist William Priest joined the Webern Symphony Orchestra at the Vienna Konzerthaus
- oboists Harvey Jones and Alana Lynch travelled to Toronto's Glenn Gould School to perform with the Royal Conservatory Orchestra under conductor William Eddins
- students from the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris joined the Academy Baroque Soloists to perform in Paris and London

Throughout the year, students benefited from coaching and mentorship by world-leading artists, including Barbara Hannigan, Roderick Cox, Edward Gardner, Susanna Mälkki and Nobuko Imai. These exchanges have deepened artistic understanding and inspired future collaborations.

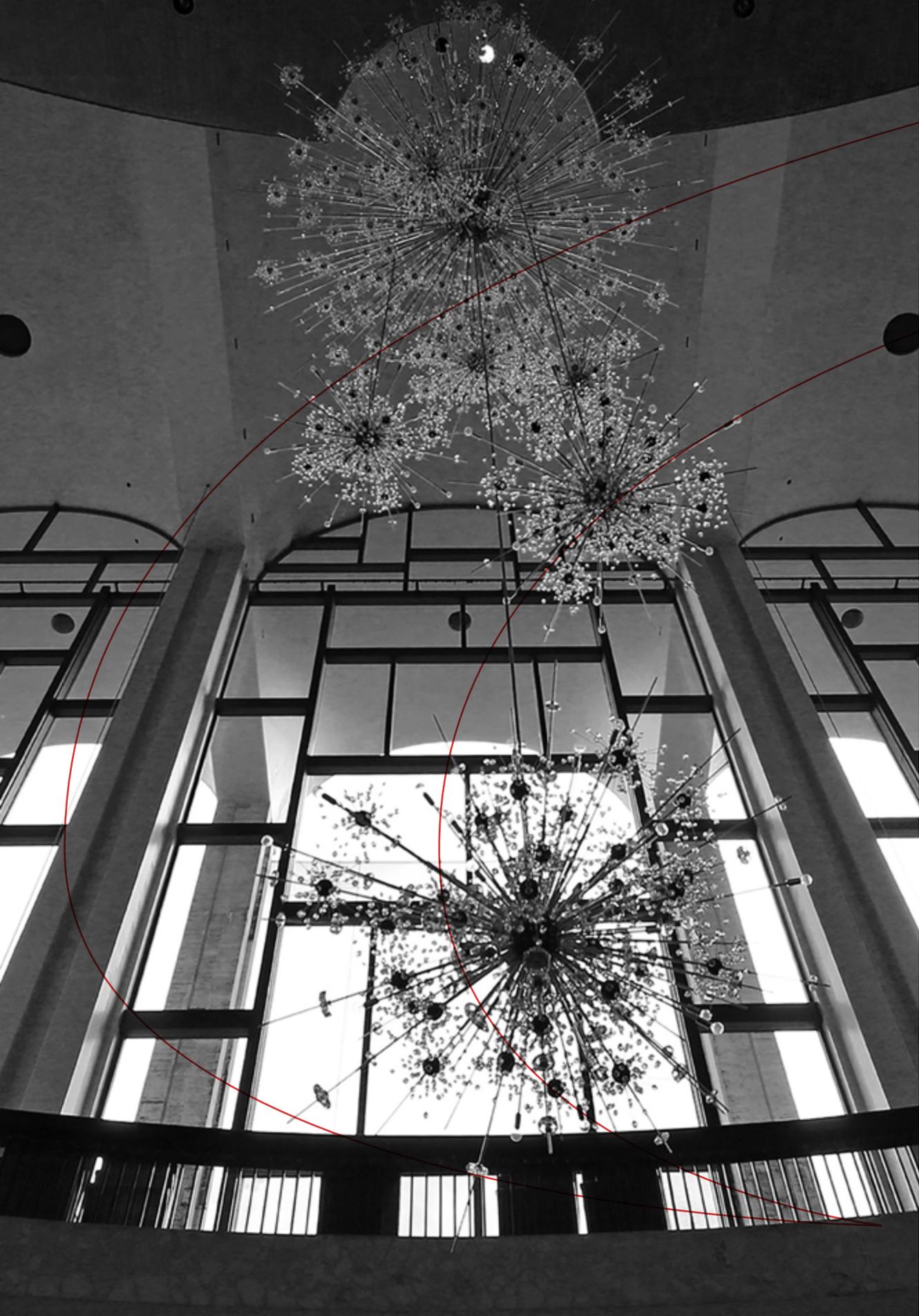


SIR ELTON JOHN GLOBAL EXCHANGE PARTNERS

- The Juilliard School, New York
- Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris
- mdw – University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna
- Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts, Helsinki
- Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofía, Madrid
- University of Music and Performing Arts, Munich
- Hanns Eisler School of Music, Berlin
- The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts
- Shanghai Conservatory of Music
- Sydney Conservatorium of Music
- Glenn Gould School of The Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto
- Tokyo University of the Arts Faculty of Music and Graduate School of Music

'The highlight of my academic year was travelling abroad to perform with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra at Carnegie Hall and Koerner Hall. Sharing the stage with renowned artists Yo-Yo Ma, Gil Shaham and Daniil Trifonov was nothing short of inspiring'

Andrea Fages Saiz
BMus Viola
Mary Samworth Award



TRANSATLANTIC SUPPORT

SPOT
LIGHT

The growing number of donors who support the American Society for the Royal Academy of Music (ASRAM) enable talent and creativity to be a driving force at the Academy

In 2024/25 the Academy was home to a thriving community of 50 American students.

Musicians from all over the world aspire to perform on the great American stages. Highlights from 2024/25 include:

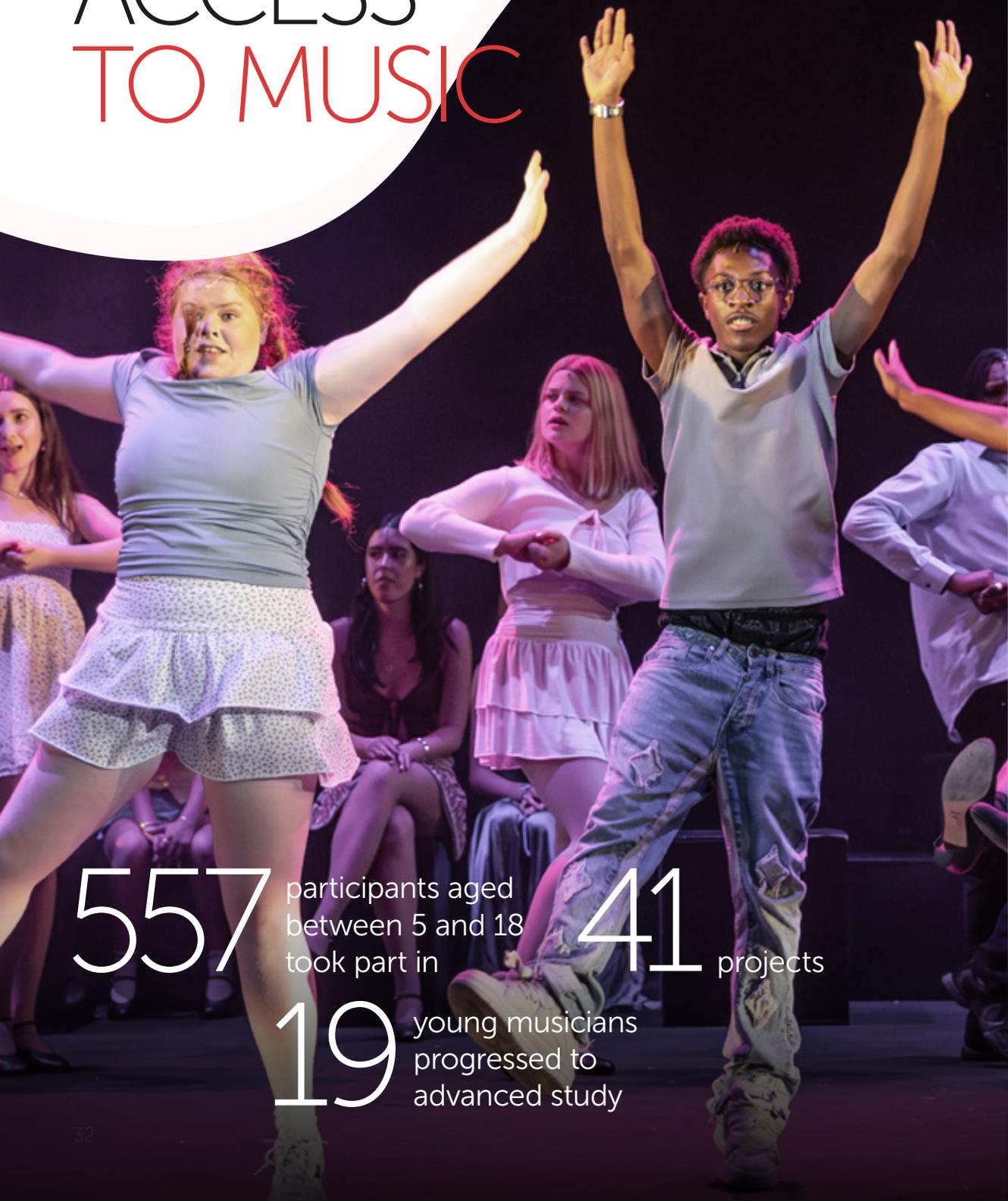
- **Metropolitan Opera: Freddie De Tommaso's debut in *Tosca* and David Butt Philip's performance in *Fidelio* were both attended by ASRAM supporters**
- **New York Philharmonic announced Sheku Kanneh-Mason as its new Mary and James G Wallach Artist-in-Residence, a role previously held by the Academy's Visiting Professor of Violin Hilary Hahn**
- **American graduate Augusta Read Thomas (pictured), one of the most performed composers of her generation, visited the Academy to work with the Manson Ensemble and participated in a Q&A session with Head of Composition, Philip Cashian**

We attract the best artists to collaborate with students:

- **trumpet players Caleb Hudson and Micah Killion from the Butler School of Music came to the Academy to teach for three days and took part in an informal concert**
- **low-latency technology enabled flawless sound quality in a series of masterclasses with Manhattan School of Music (MSM). Playwright and composer Andrea Green led a masterclass for our Musical Theatre Company, while MSM students learnt from Gatsby Chair of Musical Theatre, Professor Daniel Bowling**



TRANSFORMING ACCESS TO MUSIC



557 participants aged between 5 and 18 took part in **41** projects

19 young musicians progressed to advanced study

High-quality musical training should be accessible to more than just the fortunate few

From Junior Academy to instrument clubs and summer programmes, Widening Participation projects empower children who face structural barriers to discovering their musical potential, creating clearer progression routes into higher education.

Thanks to a transformational 10-year catalyst gift from the Alex and William de Winton Trust, young people aged 4-18 have been able to explore their creativity through our programmes, with many progressing to full-time music education.

In 2024/25, 557 young people attended 41 Academy projects, ranging from short-term initiatives and workshops to summer schools and mentoring. These included:

- **11 Audition Clubs, which reached 144 state school pupils across nine boroughs (a 38% increase from 2023/24). These increase awareness of the conservatoire system and raise aspirations for studying music beyond school**
- **new Winter and Spring Showcases which created performance opportunities for young musicians**
- **a series of workshops and talks for Year 12 and 13 students, including an audition preparation workshop, composition sessions with the Riot Ensemble and career-focused artist talks**

Nineteen students progressed to more advanced study at the Academy: eight to First String Experience, six to Junior Academy, four to Junior Jazz and one to undergraduate study.

In the seventh year of the Alex and William de Winton Trust's remarkable donation, music has been at the heart of more children's education than ever before.

In 2024/25, the Inner Ear Summer Programme, an entry pathway into conservatoire study, offered targeted, high-quality support for young musicians from under-represented backgrounds. Of seven participants, six applied to conservatoires including the Academy, and one student has subsequently joined Junior Academy.



'Attending Junior Academy has boosted my confidence and helped me grow as a performer. The training has strengthened my stagecraft, expanded my repertoire and taught me how to perform in a professional setting'

Junior Academy Musical Theatre student



COMMUNITY FIRST STRINGS EXPERIENCE

SPOT
LIGHT

Community First Strings Experience (CFSE) is a school-based programme that introduces young children to ensemble playing and instrumental learning in Reception and Years 1 and 2.

First String Experience has been a defining feature of Junior Academy for many years. CFSE is an innovative version of this programme that takes lessons out into the community, embedding teaching in two schools in South London.

Thanks to a grant from the Q Charitable Trust in 2021, CFSE's first three-year cycle helped to establish the programme as our community-based companion to First String Experience. The continued support of the Trust has allowed us to renew the existing programme for another three years in our two partner schools. Thanks to the Trust, a total of 270 children have had access to free in-school strings lessons during the first three years.

In 2024/25 we were able to launch a new initiative for young musicians to receive specialist weekly coaching as part of the new First String Experience Year 4 project. This created progression pathways for the CFSE children:

- **five students who graduated from CFSE's first cycle went on to join the new Year 4 project**
- **of the 16 CFSE students who had additional one-to-one lessons to support the transition between programmes, eight joined classes in the summer term of 2024/25 and secured financially supported places for weekly lessons throughout 2025/26**

Both partner schools reported that students' concentration and teamwork improved.

CFSE delivers more than music tuition: it creates joyful first experiences, instils confidence and discipline and offers realistic pathways into consistent music education for students who may otherwise never have had the opportunity to study music.





'Music has the power to change people's lives, provide a sense of escapism and touch emotions that you can't express in words. Open Academy enables us to experience music alongside people of all ages and from all walks of life'

Sinéad Walsh
Open Academy Fellow

OPEN ACADEMY

Participatory and community music programmes help students to develop and find new meaning in music-making

Open Academy works with a wide range of people, including young people in mainstream education, children with special educational needs and disabilities, adults with disabilities, hospital patients, care home residents and staff, and day centre attendees.

In 2024/25, Open Academy:

- worked with 1,836 children, exploring instruments, singing, composition and music-making with families living in lower-income neighbourhoods
- continued partnerships with City of London Sinfonia, working with young people with serious mental illnesses, and with St Martin-in-the-Fields and those who have experienced homelessness
- devised and led interactive performances in partnership with Spitalfields Music that toured primary schools in Tower Hamlets
- collaborated with Bromley-by-Bow Centre, a charity that helps people improve their wellbeing, learn new skills, find employment and build confidence



'We value the opportunity to share high-quality, live music-making with the children. They get to see instruments that they have never seen or heard before, like the French horn and the harp. It is good for them to see that music is a subject that can be pursued at school and at university level'

Music teacher
Rhyl Community Primary
School, London

TEACHING THE MUSIC OF TOMORROW



Inspirational teachers can change the trajectory of a young musician's life

Academy faculty are recognised throughout the profession as leaders in their fields. Our line-up of regular teachers and visiting artists includes Professor Joanna MacGregor, Sir Mark Elder, Barbara Hannigan, James Ehnes, Catrin Finch, Brett Dean, Claude-Michel Schönberg, Leif Ove Andsnes and Lucy Crowe.

By continuing to invest in vital teaching roles, we can attract and retain the very best mentors to inspire the next generation of artists.

Donations to teaching positions have already:

- **endowed the first five Chairs: the Gatsby Chair of Musical Theatre, Dame Myra Hess Chair of Piano, William Lawes Chairs of Chamber Music, Becket Chair of Historical Performance and Fernside Chair of Choral Conducting**
- **established professorships for eminent artists such as the Aud Jepsen Visiting Professorship of Piano, currently held by Leif Ove Andsnes, and the Menuhin Visiting Professor of Performance Mentoring, created for Sheku Kanneh-Mason**

Thanks to our donors, the Academy is the first UK conservatoire with fully endowed Chairs. We are now committed to securing endowed positions for all 20 of our departments.



'My teachers have played a vital role in my development. They have emphasised the importance of consistent practice, reshaped how I approach challenges and encouraged me to embrace uncertainty as a space for fluidity and creativity'

Ananda Brandão Hamon
MA Jazz Drums
Bicentenary Scholar



SHEKU KANNEH-MASON

SPOT
LIGHT

Alumnus Sheku is the inaugural Menuhin Visiting Professor of Performance Mentoring

Thanks to the generosity of The Thompson Family Charitable Trust, cellist Sheku became the Menuhin Visiting Professor of Performance Mentoring in 2022. This allowed students to learn from a successful professional performer of their own generation.

Throughout 2024/25, Sheku worked with Academy students in one-to-one lessons, classes in improvisation and in a major public masterclass. His work seeks to encourage and improve practical skills, including:

- **helping students to build confidence in improvisation and make the most of their rehearsal time**
- **sharing ideas to develop their skills in arranging and transcribing**
- **piece-specific classes featuring some of Sheku's own repertoire, as well as invitations for students to observe his rehearsals and recording sessions**

Thanks to this teaching position, Sheku has been able to share his distinctive approach with many of today's most promising musicians. With him, students have explored classical solo repertoire, chamber music and essential skills for improvising, composing and arranging new works for the cello.



OUR PLACES AND SPACES



Talented young musicians need state-of-the-art facilities that meet the demands of a rapidly evolving industry

Today's music industry is no longer just about live performance – it demands that artists are equipped with a range of technical and digital skills. That's why our courses give equal weight to media and digital composition alongside traditional acoustic techniques, preparing students to thrive in a changing creative landscape.

A grant from The Rothschild Foundation and a bequest from The Traynier Will Trust funded the transformation of our Cross Keys facilities, turning a rehearsal space into a modern, production-standard composition suite, just a 10-minute walk from the Academy.

In 2024/25, students began using this cutting-edge multimedia and electro-acoustic suite at Cross Keys. It features professional soundproofing, specialist equipment and modern furniture and hardware, creating a hub for teaching, production, recording and performance.

Composition students can now collaborate seamlessly with instrumentalists, blending live performance with digital sound in ways that were impossible before. This is a transformational opportunity for young musicians to access the tools and environment they need to innovate, experiment collaboratively and expand their creative horizons.

Back at the Academy's home on Marylebone Road, a legacy left by the late Robert Woodward, a regular attendee of Academy concerts, enabled a refurbishment of the basement Band Room over the summer of 2025. The space now functions as a bespoke practice area for brass players as well as a student locker facility.



'The composition suite is a space to explore and realise our creativity in new ways. Having access to this technology as part of the course is already inspiring me to push boundaries when I approach a project'

Luis Mesa Costero
MA Composition
WH and George
Myddleton Award
(Shelia Frankel's Estate)

'This acquisition is a game changer for the Royal Academy of Music and integral to our future as we take our already world-class facilities to a new level and to a new place – a place in the east of London with endless possibilities'

Professor Jonathan Freeman-Attwood CBE
Principal

LONDON CITY ISLAND

SPOT
LIGHT

Thanks to a generous gift of £5m, in July 2025 we announced a major project to create transformational new facilities on London City Island in Docklands. With work underway, we are actively raising funds towards the £15m needed to realise this landmark project. To discuss how you can help shape the Academy's future, please contact Conor Jordan at cjordan@ram.ac.uk or on 020 7873 7430.

The 20,000 square foot facility will enable musicians to:

- **rehearse in four large studios for Musical Theatre, Opera and large ensemble projects. Two of these studios will have the same footprint as the award-winning Susie Sainsbury Theatre, so students can rehearse within stage dimensions before performing in the theatre**
- **record their work using digital technology and use the 10 teaching and practice rooms – each with a piano and recording facilities – to hone their craft**
- **study in open plan workspaces and collaborate in the social hub**

Marylebone Road will always be at the heart of Academy life, where all public performances will continue to take place. But with London City Island just a short tube ride away, students can travel between sites and enjoy greater flexibility when rehearsing.

Joining a vibrant cultural hub alongside the BBC, English National Ballet, V&A and Sadler's Wells, Academy musicians will now be part of east London's creative future. With the building's shell provided by EcoWorld Ballymore on a 100-year peppercorn rent, we are raising funds to equip it with state-of-the-art facilities that will transform how musicians train, collaborate and perform for generations to come.

The Academy aims to achieve a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating, the sector framework used to measure and benchmark the sustainability of buildings. We will do this by installing solar panels and heat pumps, and by using low-carbon materials.



HELP US SHAPE MUSIC'S FUTURE



Extraordinary acts of philanthropy enable the Academy to invest in the musicians of the future

For over 200 years, the Academy has been defined by remarkable people and a commitment to excellence. As a modern and forward-looking conservatoire, we must continue to adapt to the changing landscape that young musicians face today.

With your support, the Academy can continue to be the place where talented emerging artists are empowered to realise their full potential.

There are still so many ways to play a part in shaping music's future, including:

- providing funding for scholarships and bursaries, so that every student can focus on their studies
- supporting the refurbishment of vital teaching and performance spaces, including investing in our new facilities on London City Island
- helping to secure the future of key teaching posts through endowed gifts to attract and retain leading mentors
- enhancing the growth of our global partnerships, which enable international collaborations and exchanges



To learn more about how you can make a gift to the Academy, please contact Lucie Kennedy, Director of Philanthropy, on director.philanthropy@ram.ac.uk or call **020 7873 7477**

THANK YOU

We wish to thank the Regents' Court of Benefactors, the Wellington Benefactors and the donors who gave £1,000 or more between 1 August 2024 and 31 July 2025



The Academy thrives thanks to the commitment and generosity of its donors, whose support shapes not only our institution but also, above all, the journeys of the young musicians who study here. We are immensely proud to acknowledge the trusts, foundations, companies and individuals whose contributions have been vital to the Academy's achievements this year. I hope you have enjoyed reading about the remarkable difference philanthropy can make through the stories and highlights of 2024/25.

Lucie Kennedy Director of Philanthropy

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